



Community Building and Communications Workgroup Meeting Minutes 1.2 Taskgroup Meeting December 9, 2008

Items Relevant to Other Workgroups

All workgroups: All discussion items relate to external communication of Campaign goals. Items pertaining to the eNews, the Campaign Web site, and a possible alliance with the Poverty Summit initiative (Voices for Action) will be of particular interest. See sections titled “Charge of 1.2 Taskgroup,” and “*What are we communicating and what are the vehicles?*”

Attendees

Judy Crockett (lead)
Connie Hackney
Bill Reid
Jeff Padden, PPA staff
Joe Quick, PPA staff

Discussion Items

Charge of 1.2 Taskgroup

- Judy introduced the charge of this taskgroup and reviewed the Action Plan with respect to the 1.2 action for the purpose of getting everyone on the same page. This action serves to develop a plan for statewide coordinated communication (1.2). This includes the who, what, when, how, how long, why, and key talking points (1.2.1). Its goal is to develop a communications network and a network of champions to carry the Campaign’s key messages to their own communities and networks (1.2.2)
- Connie Hackney reported that, while on a regional conference call earlier in the morning, those involved with the Poverty Summit discussed their need for a state-wide communication plan.
 - This is significant because of the potential for overlap and collaboration between the two groups, who have similar goals and often employ the same individuals and organizations to achieve them.
 - Those involved with the Poverty Summit (including the Voices for Action Network) are interested in the CBC workgroup’s structure.
- Jeff mentioned that MSHDA and DHS have communicated about the potential for overlap, and a possible alliance. A collaborative state-wide communication plan is a possibility. This point introduced a discussion of who should be included in the “who” mentioned in subtask 1.2.1, see next section

Questions Moving Forward

Who should be included?

- Jeff said that the “Homelessness Community” is currently being defined, to an extent, by the current snowball effect of the Campaign e-news sign-up.

- All of these people who have signed up should be included in the “who” of an external communication plan.
- The difficulty is in distinguishing between internal and external with respect to the Campaign.
 - It was decided that much of the external communication of this group would be through the Campaign’s Web site, which is in development.
- Bill Reid introduced the Michigan Association of Counties as an organization at the forefront of bridging gaps between the State and those at the local level.
 - He also introduced faith-based organizations as a possibility.
 - ◆ Jeff discussed two types of faith-based organizations.
 - Churches, leaders, and faith-based associations
 - Social service agencies in the faith-based community
- Connie mentioned the importance of including Michigan’s tribal entities, which have their own housing programs. Communication between those at MSHDA and tribal housing offices may be helpful to each, with respect to the communication plans and the programs themselves.
 - Additionally, Bill mentioned tribal casino revenue contributions to various community projects and the potential for partnership in that realm.
 - Joe agreed to send contact information he may have for housing program contacts within Michigan’s tribal entities.

Statewide External Communication Plan

Who Should Be Included

Poverty Summit Folks

Top level State agencies

The “Homelessness Community” (all organizations within the campaign)

Legislators, local officials, commissioners, township officials, local executives, local education officials, etc.

The media

Michigan Association of Counties

Michigan Municipal League

Michigan Townships Association

Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards

Michigan Association of School Boards

Faith-based groups (Michigan Catholic Conference, large Methodist associations, others)

Michigan’s tribal entities

Why develop such a plan?

- This goes back to the strategy as well: to build support for programs and the Campaign’s strategy.
- The taskgroup is devising the state-wide external communication plan in order to advance the Campaign.

What are we communicating and what are the vehicles?

- The communication efforts of the workgroup are intended to reach the grass roots level, at least in some ways.
- The message being communicated should be that of the overall Campaign. Jeff suggested that the key talking points have already been developed by the Campaign and are spelled out in existing materials (placemat “Our Vision” section, charters, etc.).
 - Jeff agreed to pick out these relevant pieces and get them out to everyone.
- Several things were discussed with regard to how the taskgroup will communicate the Campaign’s message externally.
 - The newsletter was discussed with respect to rotating story topics and features to ensure relevance to the interested parties who will receive the communication.
 - ◆ In addition, it was mentioned that a way to distinguish regular news items from urgent action items would be helpful in the eNews, such as highlighting them by color.
 - ◆ Jeff mentioned that the Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative newsletter is done at PPA, and that Homelessness news has made it into this publication in the past.
 - Continued overlap among these two e-newsletters is likely, and a system of pointing to urgent action items is already in place for that newsletter that can be used in the Campaign’s e-news as well.

Statewide External Communication Plan

Tools for Communication

The Campaign Web site

The Constant Contact CTEH eNews

Press releases/alerts to the media

Connections with other newsletters/communications

The network of “champions” (perhaps created through the 1.1 taskgroup survey)

- Questions were raised regarding how to grow/develop community champions and what to have them do once they step up to the plate.
- Social networking sites were discussed as an outreach method, especially with respect to mobilization and utilization of community champions (1.2.2).
 - Joe was asked explained the capabilities of Facebook as a tool for communicating the goals and events of the Campaign to End Homelessness.
 - The group suggested that a Facebook page could be eventually maintained by the same MSHDA employee charged with maintaining the Campaign’s Web site (which the group strongly suggested should be a full-time employee).
 - Joe agreed to set up a Facebook group page for the Campaign to be shaped by the workgroup.
- With respect to Action Item 1.2.3, Jeff proposed that there were three parties responsible for the network created and addressed by this taskgroup:
 - The CBC action 1.2 taskgroup will have an ongoing responsibility to monitor the effectiveness of the state-wide coordinated communication strategy.
 - Mary Lou Keenon’s communications group at MSHDA (within taskgroup member Gary Heidel’s shop).
 - Pace and Partners, which is MSHDA’s communications contractor.

Tasks Completed

- Taskgroup clarified their mission and named several entities that should be included in a Statewide External Communication Plan.
- eNews sign-up snowball process is underway and a draft of the eNews is being worked on.

Tasks Assigned

Next steps and Assignments

- Judy to schedule January meeting of the action1.2 taskgroup.
- Jeff agreed to pick out relevant pieces from MSHDA documents that point to the Campaign goals and message, and to get them out to taskgroup members.
- Joe agreed to:
 - Set up a Facebook group page for the Campaign to End Homelessness.
 - Send instructions to members on starting a Facebook account.
 - Invite Jeff and taskgroup members to view and modify the page as needed.
- Joe agreed to send contact information he may have for housing program contacts within Michigan's tribal entities.

Next Meeting

Next meeting to be scheduled by Judy for some time in January.